

SENATE BILL 615

By Williams

AN ACT to enact the "Tennessee Amber Alert Plan" and to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 38 and Title 39.

Whereas, Amber Alert Plans provide access to state and regional emergency alert systems allowing law enforcement officials to disseminate information to the general public when a child, or other individual, has been abducted and is feared to be in imminent danger; and

Whereas, such plans have been developed and implemented in many states and local jurisdictions and have been successfully activated to save the lives of dozens of children; and

Whereas, since November 2001, the Tennessee bureau of investigation ("TBI") has taken preliminary steps in developing a statewide network; and

Whereas, this general assembly recognizes the important work of the TBI and is supportive of the bureau's undertaking;

Whereas, a successful statewide Amber Alert Plan is a cooperative effort among state, local and national law enforcement, transportation and emergency agencies as well as the news media and other emergency service broadcasters; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Tennessee Amber Alert Plan."

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 38, Chapter 6, Part 1, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

Section 38-6-120.

(a) The Tennessee bureau of investigation ("TBI") shall develop a coordinated program for a statewide emergency alert plan to be activated when a child, or an individual with a proven mental or physical disability, is missing and is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death and there exists information that, if disseminated to the general public, could assist in the safe recovery of such child or individual.

(b) In developing such plan, the TBI is encouraged to consult with the department of safety, the Tennessee emergency management agency, the department of transportation, the Tennessee sheriffs' association, the Tennessee association of chiefs of police, the Tennessee association of broadcasters and any other state, federal or local agency that, in the opinion of the TBI, is necessary in the development and implementation of a successful Amber Alert Plan.

SECTION 3. The commissioner of the TBI is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the provisions of this act.

SECTION 4. The TBI shall report its progress in developing the Tennessee Amber Alert Plan to the senate and house judiciary committees at their first meetings in February 2004.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.